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Weekly Report 10 (July 25, 2006)

I have changed the platform that the ball is balancing on. It was a circular platform that was covered with black fabric. Now it's a square platform that is simply painted black. This has helped in many areas. I can now restrict the cameras viewing window to just the platform. This allows me to let the robot drive over a multi-colored floor and not get confused. For some reason this new platform seems much stabler too. My only guess is that it's somewhat lighter and smaller.

I was a little worried that using a platform that was painted instead of covered in black fabric would be less forgiving and it would be much harder to control the ball. Thankfully it only took some minor tweaking to get everything working on the stiffer surface. Although it does take slightly longer to settle.

The motors should be delivered today. I already have all the obstacle avoidance code written and tested on high rpm, low torque motors. So it should work with the new ones without much work. I can't seem to get my IR working very well though. It only seems to detect things less than 4 inches. This seems too close. I've already ordered some sonar incase the IR's performance is to low.

I've also changed the name of my robot. Since I'll no longer be delivering anything, "Delivery Boy" doesn't seem appropriate. I've decided to change it to Atlas, after the Titan who was condemned to holding the world on his shoulders. I don't know much about mythology, but someone suggested this name and it seems more appropriate.

